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SIPDIS

NEA/ARP, USAID/W, DCHA/OFDA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAID](#) [ECON](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [YM](#) [KU](#)
SUBJECT: KUWAIT INCREASES ASSISTANCE TO HAITI

REF: KUWAIT 35

11. (U) This is an action request. Please see paragraph 5.

12. (U) Summary. On January 28 DCM and Econcouns met with Yousef Al-Merag, Director of Disaster relief for the Kuwait Red Crescent Society (KRCS), to discuss the status of GoK,s pending offer of in-kind assistance to Haiti and to thank him for Kuwait's support. Emboffs explained some of the logistical challenges involved in having the USG transport to Haiti Red Crescent relief supplies and urged the Red Crescent to reach out to international organizations to coordinate regarding the type of aid to be provided, and to seek additional delivery options. Al-Merag confirmed the increase of GoK support to USD \$3.5 million total. (Note: USD \$1 million has already been disbursed to the IFRC and approximately USD \$330,000 of in-kind goods has been purchased and is awaiting transport. End Note.) Econcouns urged KRCS to send the remaining balance as a cash donation and Al-Merag stated that the KRCS was working with the IFRC to determine how the funds would be spent and alluded to the possibility of funding specific reconstruction projects in Haiti. End Summary.

13. (U) Econcouns and Al-Merag discussed the status of the 116 tons of goods which has been prepared by KRCS for immediate shipment (ref a). Econcouns explained the restrictions on having the U.S. military ship most of the items, which were not considered to be appropriate or top-priority items by USAID,s OFDA. Al-Merag explained that he had coordinated with the IFRC in preparing his list of items (although acknowledging this had been two weeks ago) and expressed surprise that they would not be a priority. He added that all of the goods were palletized and asked whether he should return the medical supplies to the Ministry of Health. Econcouns urged him to coordinate with other international donor agencies to see what they thought priorities on the ground were. DCM noted that the Haitians did appear to have identified an urgent need for tents. Al-Merag said that the current palletized shipment had 300 tents, but that he had an additional 5,000 tents that could be made available immediately (estimated weight of 225 tons). Al-Merag agreed to provide specifications on the tents.

14. (U) Al-Merag told Econcouns that the GoK has identified a 747 passenger aircraft that is available to move 25 tons of the in-kind supplies as soon as Saturday. He expressed interest in moving the goods to Miami for onward shipment by the U.S. military. Econcouns reiterated the difficulties involved in obtaining U.S. military flights for items that were not on the USAID priority list and suggested that he coordinate with aid agencies in Haiti to see whether a shipment directly to Haiti would make more sense. Al-Merag agreed to contact IFRC to coordinate the movement.

15. (SBU) Action Request: The Red Crescent is an established

and experienced aid organization. Post appreciates all the efforts to facilitate the shipment of Kuwaiti aid to Haiti, but notes that ten days after the GoK first requested transportation assistance, we have yet to be able to respond definitively. If Haiti has identified an urgent need for tents, facilitating the shipment of these tents to Haiti (including, if possible via U.S. military air given the weight) would appear to be a win-win scenario. Department guidance appreciated. End Action Request.

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